

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

# FSIS NOTICE

16-01

4/24/01

## INSPECTION FOR SQUABS

### What is the purpose of this notice?

This notice announces that the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) intends to incorporate squabs, also termed young pigeons, into its mandatory poultry inspection regulations and eliminate such inspection from the Agency's voluntary poultry inspection program.

### What is a "squab"?

A "squab" is a fledgling pigeon, of either sex, that is tender-meated with soft, pliable, smooth-textured skin, flexible breastbone cartilage, and has not flown yet.

### Why is squab inspection mandatory?

The FY 2001 Agriculture Appropriations Act, signed by the President on October 28, 2000, declared that 180 days after the date of its enactment, U.S. establishments slaughtering or processing squabs for distribution into commerce as human food will be subject to the requirements of the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA) rather than the voluntary poultry inspection program under section 203 of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946.

### What is the Agency policy regarding squab slaughter and processing?

A. Effective April 26, 2001, establishments processing squabs will be inspected pursuant to the PPIA.

B. Inspection under the regulations is required at every establishment as described in § 381.6.

DISTRIBUTION: Inspection  
Offices;T/A Inspectors;Plant Mgt;T/A  
Plant Mgt;ABB;PRD;Import Offices

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C. All parts of the FSIS regulations (9 CFR) that apply to poultry will be applicable to squabs.

**What establishment operator's responsibilities do FSIS inspection program personnel need to verify?**

A. Make application to the District Office for inspection service in accordance with § 381.16 and FSIS Directive 5220.1;

B. Comply with all parts of 9 CFR applicable to poultry except as otherwise specified in the regulations for specific poultry classes;

C. Develop, maintain, and adhere to written sanitation standard operating procedures (Sanitation SOP's) that comply with 9 CFR part 416; and

D. Implement HACCP systems to address food safety hazards that are reasonably likely to occur in their operations in accordance with 9 CFR part 417.

**What are the FSIS inspection program personnel responsibilities?**

A. Enforce mandatory poultry inspection requirements of the PPIA;

B. Provide necessary inspection as per § 381.7; and

C. Ensure that squab products are wholesome, not adulterated, and properly labeled in accordance with applicable provisions of 9 CFR parts 381, 416, and 417.

**Are there any inspection activities specific for squabs?**

A. Squab slaughter inspection will be conducted according to the traditional inspection procedures. The maximum production line rates under traditional inspection are applicable according to § 381.67. FSIS has published an Interim Final Rule that amends its regulations to add "squab" to the title, and, as appropriate, to the contents, of § 381.67.

B. All applicable inspection procedures described in FSIS Directives 5400.5, Inspection System Activities, and 5000.1, Enforcement of Regulatory Requirements in Establishments Subject to the HACCP System Regulations, will be conducted in the inspected establishment.

C. In support of the pathogen reduction (PR) initiative, FSIS intends to conduct baseline surveys for establishing performance criteria to reflect the prevalence and levels of contamination of *Escherichia coli* and performance standards for *Salmonella* on squab carcasses produced nationwide.

### **What are the changes in administrative procedures and practices?**

A. Inspection program personnel inspecting squabs are to use new program codes (Note: Program codes are referred to as management codes in previous FSIS Directives and Notices). FSIS must account separately for the cost of inspecting squabs; therefore, there are unique program codes to be used on time and attendance records, travel vouchers, and Form 5110-1. Attachments 1 and 2 provide a listing of these unique program codes to be used effective April 26, 2001. Attachment 1 provides the reimbursable codes to be used when both the establishment and inspection program personnel are on overtime, and the establishment is to be billed for inspection services using a Form 5110-1. Attachment 2 provides the appropriated codes for the standard 8-hour shift for squab inspection. On time and attendance records, any squab inspection activity should be recorded regardless of duration, in a minimum of ¼ hour increments. For a complete explanation of the completion of Time and Attendance Records, refer to FSIS Directive 3530.4, "Time and Attendance Reporting."

B. Squab establishments will no longer be billed for the cost of inspection, except when both the plant and inspector are on overtime as is the case for other species under the mandatory inspection program. (Refer to the "Reimbursable Services Guide" FSIS Directive 5110.1 for additional information as to billing for overtime services.) Therefore, effective April 26, 2001, inspection program personnel in squab establishments will no longer be completing Form 5110-1 for their standard 8-hour shift for purposes of billing the establishment for inspection services.

### **Will there be any port-of entry activities?**

A. All countries that want to export squab product to the United States may do so for an 18-month period beginning April 26, 2001, subject to the following conditions. Countries that are already eligible to export poultry may export squab product to the United States if they certify the squab establishments. Countries that are not eligible to export poultry may export squab product to the United States if they submit a request for poultry equivalence and work with the Agency to satisfy any issues that might arise during the 18-month period.

B. After the 18-month period ends, all squab product must come from eligible countries and be accompanied by an FSIS poultry health certificate and be presented for FSIS reinspection. No squab product needs an FSIS poultry health certificate or needs to be presented for FSIS reinspection until after the 18-month period ends.

**Whom do inspection program personnel contact for further guidance?**

For questions concerning this notice, please contact the Director, Inspection and Enforcement Standards Development Staff (IESDS) at telephone (202) 720-3219 or write to the following address:

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/s/ Philip S. Derfler

Deputy Administrator  
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